

Michigan's Safe Delivery of Newborns Law



Education & Training

January 2008



History & Legislation

- Increase in newborn abandonment in 2000.
- Michigan lawmakers enact Safe Delivery of Newborns law effective 1/1/2001.
- The law was amended 12/2006.
- Legal protections to surrender a newborn safely and anonymously. Safe, Legal and Anonymous.
- Focuses on safe choices and protection of newborn.



Safe Delivery of Newborns Law*

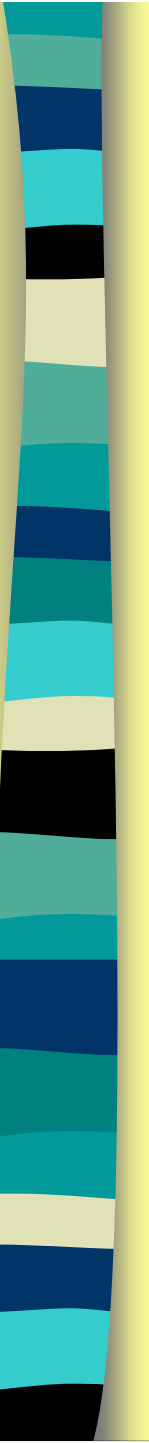
- Parents can anonymously surrender a newborn within 72 hours of birth to an ESP.
- ESP is an employee/contractor of a hospital, fire department or police station. And EMS when responding to a 9-1-1 emergency call.
- Newborn examined by physician.
- Unharmed newborn transferred to child placing agency.
- Parents may change their mind within 28 days of surrender.

***Public Acts 488 of 2006 and 232, 233, 234 & 235 of 2000**

Who Abandons A Newborn?

- No “typical” profile.
- Infant abandonment crosses all socioeconomic groups, ages, races, ethnicity & educational levels.





Why Parents Abandon Their Newborn

- Isolation and denial.
- No alternatives.
- Immature.
- Lack adequate housing or money.



Surrendering Parent Rights


- Informed that the newborn will be placed for adoption.
- There are 28 days to petition for return.
- May be anonymous but encouraged to provide family/medical information.
- Information shared will not be made public.
- No criminal investigation initiated.



ESP Responsibilities

■ MAKE A REASONABLE ATTEMPT TO:

- ✓ Provide Safe Delivery written information.
- ✓ Encourage completion of family/medical background.
- ✓ Inform parent of counseling/medical services.
- ✓ Encourage parent to share identity.
- ✓ Identify the non-surrendering parent.
- ✓ Inform parent shared information will not be made public.
- ✓ Inform that the child placing agency will provide services.
- ✓ Inform parent they may sign a release.



Child Placing Agency Responsibilities

- Meet with the parent, if known.
- Place newborn with approved adoptive family.
- Contact law enforcement.
- File a placement petition in court.
- Attempt to identify, locate & provide notice of the surrender to the non-surrendering parent.
- Petition for termination of parent rights.

What Happens to the Newborn? Are There Signs of Abuse/Neglect?



- Unharmed newborn placed with prospective adoptive family.
- After 28 days child placing agency petitions for termination of parental rights, or
- Parent petitions for return.


Safe Delivery Effectiveness

- 54 Newborns Surrendered In 17 Counties*
- Surrendered At The Following Locations:
 - Hospitals: 51**
 - Fire Departments: 2
 - Police Station: 1

* As of 12/31/2007

**Majority delivered at the hospital where the surrender occurred.



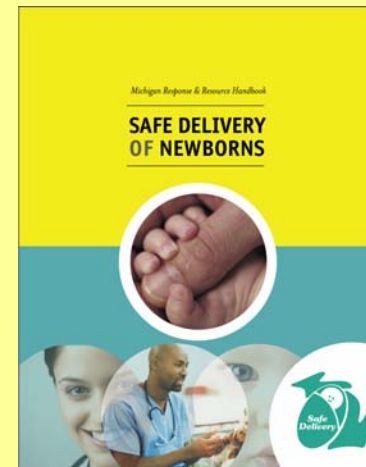


Program Evaluation & Survey Results

- Evaluation of public/professional awareness.
- MSU's State of the State Survey November 2005.
- 85% not familiar with the law.
- 15% learned about the law through media.
- 99% felt it was important to educate the public.

Education & Training for Emergency Service Providers

- Development & distribution of Response & Resource Handbook.
- Development, production & distribution of signage.
- Development & distribution of PSA.





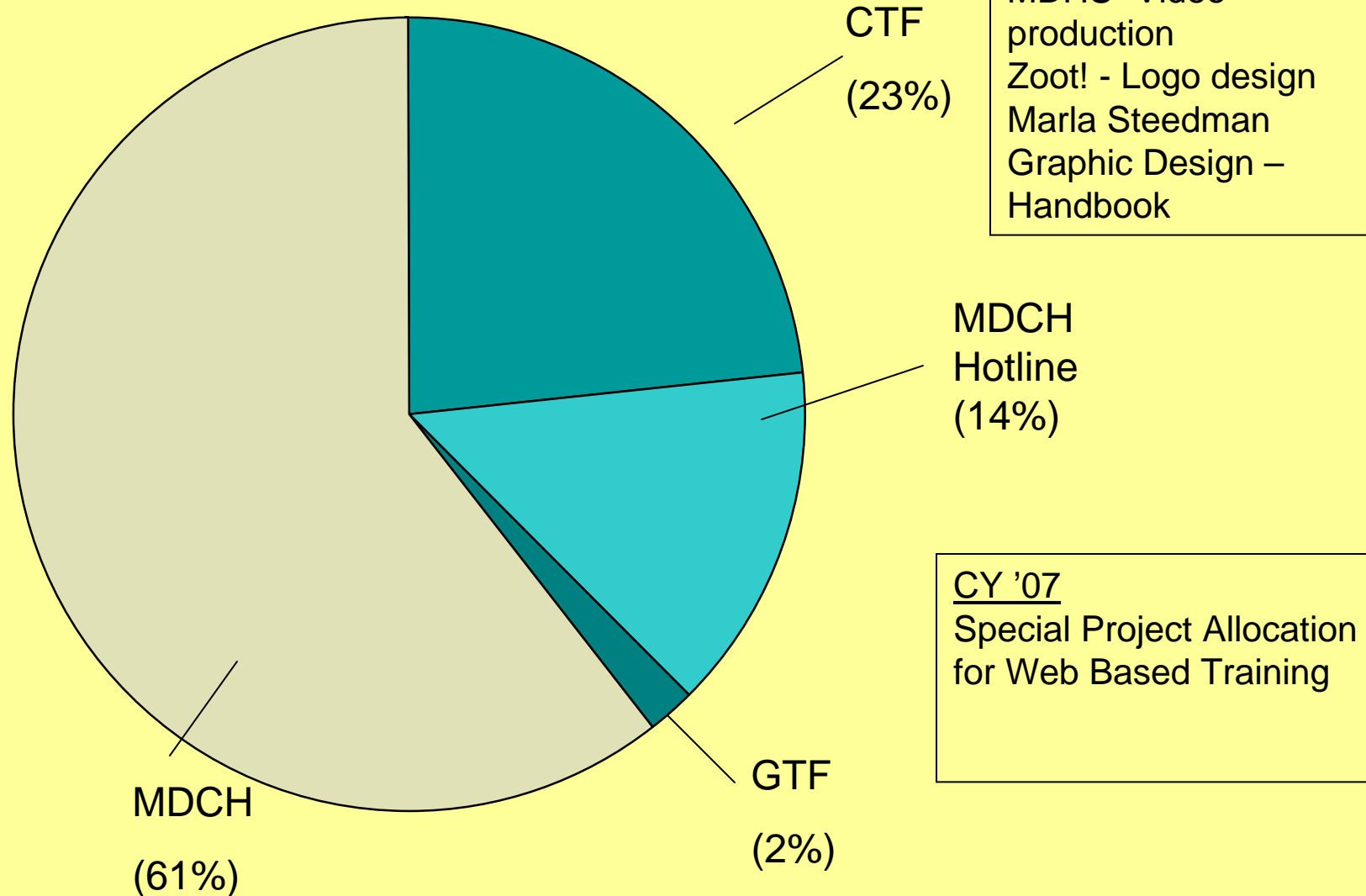
Public/Professional Awareness

- Hotline/Web site.
- Safe Delivery Logo.
- Safe Delivery of Newborns Day Proclamation.
- Media events.
- Conference workshops and/or displays.
- ESP signage.
- Education curriculum.





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Future plans:

- Additional handbooks and signs.
- Create handbooks for educators, adoption agencies and other professionals.
- Translation of Safe Delivery materials.
- Develop court benchbook.
- Public awareness campaign.
- Develop & conduct trainings.



Safe Delivery Information

- Toll Free Number: 1-866-733-7733 for public and professionals.
- Web site: www.michigan.gov/dhs, click on the Safe Delivery logo.
- Order DHS publications & forms: 517-373-7837.